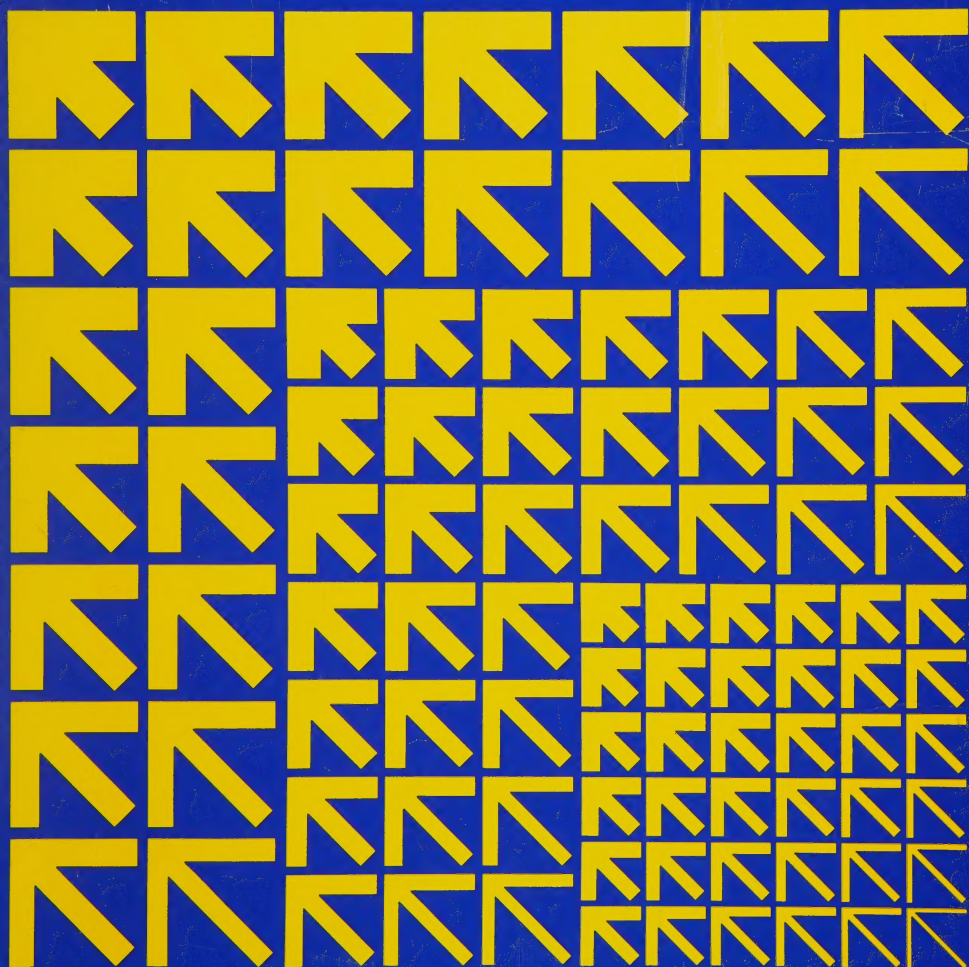




Northwestern
Ontario

A Policy for
Development

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Northwestern Ontario

A Policy for Development

Government
Publications

May 1979

The Honourable
Leo Bernier, Minister
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The Honourable
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Ministry of
Northern Affairs

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Miscellaneous publication

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A Policy for Development

In January 1978, the Province released a white paper on Northwestern Ontario entitled *A Strategy for Development*. The document reviewed the current and planned policies of the various government ministries for the Northwest, and represented the combined evaluation and proposals of all ministries regarding economic and social development issues in the region. This statement presents the Government of Ontario's policy in respect to the proposed Strategy, and reflects its consideration of comments received on the white paper. A summary of that white paper is appended.

The Strategy was a result of a review undertaken to ensure that the Design for Development policies for the Northwest, first enunciated in 1970, remain relevant to current and expected regional conditions. The white paper was preceded by a companion document issued in 1977 entitled *Initiatives and Achievements*, which reviewed the substantial record of success in realizing many of the goals and recommendations set out in the 1970 Design for Development report. The broad policy proposals and frameworks proposed in the white paper were designed to build on this base and to provide general policy guidance for a five to ten year period into the future.

Following release of the white paper, briefs were invited from any individual or group wishing to comment on the document. In order to ensure full opportunity for commentaries to be prepared, the government twice extended the deadline for receipt of briefs. It is significant to note that this consultative process represented a continuation of efforts pursued by the Province during the course of the preparation of the white paper itself.

In the process of developing the Strategy, the Province benefitted from the representations and studies prepared by various groups and agencies having an interest in Northwestern Ontario. In particular, the Municipal Advisory Committee, through its own deliberations and through commentary on earlier drafts of the white paper, provided a valuable perspective on regional

issues. The Committee met in a two-day session with a number of members of the Cabinet at Quetico Centre in September 1977 to review a draft of the Strategy document. In preparing that white paper, the Province also consulted various reports and presentations of the Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce, the Quetico Committee on Getting and Holding Manpower, the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, the Ontario Economic Council and other organizations.

In the process of arriving at this Policy Statement in respect to the white paper, the Province has continued to benefit from the views and presentations of these and other groups. An important input to the Province's deliberations were the fourteen written briefs received dealing with the document. These briefs provided many specific comments on the proposed Strategy, and thus represented a valuable contribution to the process.

Six of the fourteen briefs were received from municipalities in the region; four were authored by social service and health bodies; and four came from other regional associations, including Chambers of Commerce. Although each submission expressed some reservations in regard to various individual proposals contained in the draft Strategy, on balance the briefs agreed with the basic concepts and approaches outlined in the white paper.

Views were also expressed through the wide range of forums that now exist in the Northwest, particularly the consultative relationships that many groups have established with the Ministry of Northern Affairs.

All of these contacts have helped the Province ensure that the outline of general principles as provided by the Strategy is appropriate to the needs of the Northwest. The Strategy will serve as a framework or guideline for the development of specific initiatives and programs in the region.

The Strategy should not be viewed as the definitive, all-inclusive "plan" for Northwestern Ontario. As was noted throughout the white paper, the Northwestern Region is characterized by continuous change. Policy approaches and program initiatives must be

flexible, in order to respond to new and evolving conditions. For this reason alone, a development strategy must be viewed as a transitional document subject to regular review and adjustment. The implementation procedures described below provide assurance that changing circumstances will be recognized.

Before moving to that discussion, one concern expressed over the white paper must be addressed. Opposition to the "designated growth centre" approach was voiced in many briefs and in other quarters, including a resolution passed by the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association in May, 1978. In light of these concerns, the Government has re-considered the identification of growth centres. The Province has decided that the potential dangers in having a designation concept misinterpreted, to the detriment of those communities not specified, must be avoided. The Province, therefore, will drop the concept of designated communities. Rather, Ontario will follow a flexible approach that will recognize the need for a case-by-case Provincial response to community needs throughout the region.

With the exception of this single, yet significant, modification relating to the designation concept, the Government is adopting A Strategy for Development as a *statement of policy*.

The Ministry of Northern Affairs will assume responsibility for coordinating all developmental activities by working with all Ministries and agencies within the confirmed framework of policies outlined in the Strategy. The Regional and Community Priorities Budget will remain an important funding tool of the Ministry in undertaking key projects in the north. About half of the funds will be spent in the Northwest. The Ministry is well-established in the Northwest and through its regional and area offices in Kenora and Thunder Bay, supported by eleven field offices, is in an excellent position to ensure that local interests continue to be carefully evaluated in future decision-making.

The Ministry of Treasury and Economics will continue to provide the broad economic development direction for the region.

If the development potential of the Northwest is to be fully realized, new initiatives must be pursued by all levels of government. A Strategy for Development emphasized the initiatives to be pursued by the Province in improving the economic and social conditions of Northwestern Ontario. It must be kept in mind, however, that while governments can do much to facilitate development in the region, the extent to which such development is realized will depend very much upon initiatives taken in the private sector.

For its part, the Province has already initiated a number of measures which support the policies in A Strategy for Development. The Regional and Community Priorities Budget is providing nearly \$135 million in the current fiscal year for a wide variety of special projects including municipal services, roads, airports and resource development in the region. Other measures that will help promote development in Northwestern Ontario were contained in the April Budget which include assistance for both the tourism and mining sectors. Ontario also announced in January of this year that it will provide major incentives to assist Ontario's pulp and paper industry in its efforts to modernize and meet pollution abatement standards. This industry is the leading manufacturing employer in the Northwest and these measures to strengthen its competitive position will be of considerable benefit to the region.

As well, the Province is involved in ongoing discussions with the federal government directed to jointly assisting development activities in support of A Strategy for Development. In this connection, a Forest Management agreement was signed between Ontario and Canada in December, 1978 which provides \$71.5 million in government funds to improve access to northern Ontario's forest resources and to enhance the quality of forest management. This will be complemented by related spending on the part of pulp and paper companies that will, in effect, double the impact of this program. Federal-provincial discussions on other development measures are continuing.

The process of review and evaluation of Provincial initiatives and development issues in Northwestern Ontario that has taken place over the past two years has yielded substantial benefits over and above ensuring that policies are in tune with today's needs. In preparing A Strategy for Development, a new level of cooperation and a basis of coordinated priority setting was established within the provincial government and between the Province and local governments. Virtually every provincial ministry made a contribution to the production of the Strategy and this involvement helped increase the understanding of the unique needs of Northwestern Ontario in all ministries. Within the region itself, this process has led to an increased awareness of the issues and special needs of the Northwest. The municipalities of the Northwest, through the auspices of the Municipal Advisory Committee, began to jointly examine development issues of regional significance.

This enhanced level of dialogue and understanding is extremely significant, and should continue into the future. The Ministry of Northern Affairs has established a wide range of consultative relationships with regional organizations, and its network of offices throughout the Northwest makes the Ministry accessible to virtually all residents of the region. This high level of dialogue—within government, between governments, and between government and the region's residents—will help ensure that initiatives pursued within the framework of A Strategy for Development will reflect the real needs and desires of the people of Northwestern Ontario.

Note: This summary has been extracted from the white paper Northwestern Ontario: A Strategy for Development which was originally published in January, 1978. Several modifications have been made to this summary to reflect the changes noted in the preceding statement of policy.

Introduction and Background

This paper presents an economic and social development strategy for Northwestern Ontario. It is a draft, intended for thorough review and discussion by the citizens of the Northwest. This paper:

- Reviews the steps taken by the Ontario government to implement the 1971 strategy;
- Sets out the issues facing the region today; and
- Outlines proposals and ideas to deal with these issues.

This update of *Design for Development: Northwestern Ontario Region* was prepared with four primary objectives in mind:

Local Involvement: A workable strategy must reflect the experience and aspirations of the people in the Northwest. Accordingly, there has been extensive consultation with the Municipal Advisory Committee (MAC).¹ The MAC reviewed and made many contributions to this draft strategy.

Realism: A positive strategy must be compatible with the realities of national and provincial policies and constraints; otherwise, it is pie in the sky. Not the least of these constraints is the need to contain strictly the growth of government spending.

Scope: Just as a solid strategy cannot reflect the views of only one segment of society, neither can it reflect a narrow perspective of government policies and programs. Accordingly, virtually all ministries in the Ontario government have directly contributed to this document. It is designed to reflect the practical views and experience of those who are directly responsible for government programs, particularly staff with experience in Northwestern Ontario.

Commitment: A clear goal of the government is to ensure that Northwestern Ontario continues to grow and flourish in the decades to come. The purpose of identifying problems and constraints is not to put insurmountable barriers in the path of development, but rather to find positive ways of overcoming them.

In October 1970, *Design for Development: Northwestern Ontario Region* was released.² It contained a series of policy and program recommendations geared to stimulating economic growth and improving the general level of prosperity and conditions of life in the Northwest. In 1971, following public review of this document, the report was adopted, with some modifications, as a statement of policy.³

Over the past six years, the government has taken a large number of steps to achieve the objectives set out in 1970. The most significant of these was the creation of the Regional Priority Budget, which has resulted in some \$70 million worth of priority government spending in Northwestern Ontario. This and other programs are reviewed in detail in a companion document to this one, *Design for Development: Northwestern Ontario, Initiatives and Achievements*.⁴

One of the major initiatives taken recently was the establishment of the Ministry of Northern Affairs. The new ministry helps to coordinate all Ontario government programs in the north and has its own administrative functions, as well. The Ministry of Northern Affairs will play a key role in guiding the implementation of this strategy over the coming years.

Current Economic Conditions

Since 1971, economic indicators for the Northwest have pointed to a stronger regional economy, with 10,000 new jobs and rising levels of per capita income. However, the optimism inherent in these positive economic achievements must be tempered

¹The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Advisory Committee is composed of elected representatives from the councils of all organized municipalities in the region.

²The Hon. C.S. MacNaughton, *Design for Development: Northwestern Ontario Region, Phase 2: Policy Recommendations* (October 1970).

³The Hon. W. Darcy McKeough, *A Policy Statement on the Northwestern Ontario Region* (August 1971).

⁴The Hon. Leo Bernier and the Hon. W. Darcy McKeough, *Design for Development: Northwestern Ontario, Initiatives and Achievements* (September 1977).

by the recognition that the regional economy is still highly reliant on resources which are subject to the uncertainties of world markets. Moreover, not all groups in the region participate fully in current development. Capital-intensive resource development tends to lead to the creation of well-paying jobs for workers directly involved in the industry, but local employment spin-offs may be somewhat limited. Nevertheless, it is clear that the economic well-being of the region has improved since 1971.

The Ontario economy as a whole is facing strong challenges. Ontario's international competitiveness in manufacturing has weakened somewhat in recent years because of productivity performance and rising cost pressures. These cost pressures, particularly, are compounded in Northwestern Ontario by long distances from major markets and suppliers and the resulting transportation costs. Internal linkages in the region's economy are comparatively weak, and the local market is limited by the small, dispersed nature of the population base.

While there has been significant growth in the service sector of the region over the past decade, much of this expansion has been in the form of "catch up" growth. It is anticipated that this rate of growth, particularly in social services, will moderate in the future.

The potential for resource-based industries is strong. There are indications of significant mineral deposits having potential for development, but, at the present time, because of the weak investment climate, no new developments are under way. In forestry-related activities, the potential for expansion lies mainly in resource upgrading and further processing, since most of the productive forest-land already has been licensed for current operations. The rigours of international competition and the need for an improved domestic investment climate must be recognized as significant

factors affecting the future of both these key activities in the Northwestern economy.

This update of *Design for Development: Northwestern Ontario Region*, was prepared with an appreciation of these economic factors in mind.

Economic Development

Overall economic and fiscal policies for the province are the responsibility of the Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Inter-governmental Affairs. It is proposed that the government continue an economic development thrust emphasizing diversification of the regional economy, primarily in activities directly related to the natural resource base. The central economic development objective is to maximize employment and income growth by obtaining greater economic value locally from resources by both upgrading the utilization of these resources and, where economically feasible, further processing.

This approach would be complemented by the continued development of supporting service activities and related manufacturing facilities. In arriving at this proposed strategy, the document reviews the limits of the resource base in the Northwest and provides a cautious, but realistic, commentary on the potential for diversification of the region's economy away from its natural resource base.

Some of the important implications of successfully pursuing this strategy are:

- The economy would continue to be subject to cyclical change, but this impact would be moderated;
- The removal of constraints to development of the region's resources would become a strengthened priority, consistent with social and environmental goals;
- Limitations on development would be accepted in order to protect the environment in accordance with existing standards;
- Economic-scale requirements would tend to restrict large resource projects to major corporations capable of financing these activities;

- The regional industrial and commercial community, however, could provide many of the related smaller-scale service and manufacturing activities;
- Special manpower training efforts may be required to diversify the labour-force skills in the area and to ensure that the region's current residents are equipped to participate in future development.
- To establish policies and standards for community development, so that services and housing can be provided at a reasonable cost, and to deal with the social, economic, and physical problems of new or declining resource communities.

Agriculture and Food

Agricultural production capability in Northwestern Ontario is far beyond that which is presently being utilized, and it is a priority to utilize this potential more fully.

Other issues of particular concern include high-capability agricultural lands, the lack of an organized marketing structure for non-dairy products, and the fragmentation of viable agricultural operations as a result of residential severences.

In terms of future approaches, the ministry's policies to protect foodland as they relate to the Northwest are explained, with particular emphasis on their potential impact through official plans in protecting high-capability agricultural lands. It is suggested that alternative produce and agricultural pursuits beyond dairy and cow/calf operations could be successful in the region. Improved pasture and forage management is to be further encouraged.

Energy

Four energy-related issues are identified:

- Agriculture and Food
 - Energy
 - Environment
 - Housing
 - Industry and Tourism
 - Labour
 - Natural Resources
 - Transportation and Communications
 - Uncertainty over the long-term availability and price of energy;
 - Concern regarding the impact and location of electric power transmission lines and generating stations;
 - The impact of natural gas pipeline construction in the event of development of frontier resources; and
 - The relatively high price of some forms of energy.
- In proposing their various development strategies within this broad economic development framework, the ministries in the Resources Policy Field have been guided by the following basic objectives:
- To maintain programs that contribute to a positive and stable climate for further investment;
 - To provide for the optimum allocation of land and water resources to serve economic needs, while taking into account various social, physical, and environmental factors and the resolution of conflicts for certain resources between competing interests;
 - To encourage the development of the region's resources through further exploration and research, the initiation of new ventures, and the processing of raw materials;
 - To continue to improve the availability of local skills through job-training programs;

Resources Development

Each ministry in the Resources Development Field proposes to gear its programs and strategies to meeting the overall objectives of development in the Northwest. The ministries included in this policy field are:

While the pricing of energy is primarily a federal responsibility, Ontario has consistently taken a strong stand in urging the federal government to protect the interests of Ontario consumers by limiting crude oil and natural gas price increases. Concerning the north in particular, a number of initiatives are now under way in the ministry.

- Studies into the electrification alternatives for remote communities have resulted in a three-year program to provide service to communities which qualify. This is in addition to the federal-provincial Indian Community Electrification Program and the Telecom Power Program.
- Ontario Hydro's current long-term plan will meet expected growth in electric power consumption in the Northwest to beyond 1983. A study to establish a long-term plan for meeting needs from 1983 to 2003 is being undertaken.
- The Ministry of Energy is participating in the Polar Gas Project study.
- The ministry is pursuing with the petroleum industry ways in which increased efficiency can reduce unit costs in Northern Ontario.

In addition to the above, the ministry is also working to promote experimental programs in wind/diesel hybrid generating systems, the use of wood waste and refuse as energy sources, and the potential of biomass for methanol production.

Environment

The primary emphasis of the Ministry of the Environment in this study is to establish a proper balance between the objectives of economic development and pollution control. While this objective is common to the province as a whole, the unique physical and economic characteristics of the Northwest intensify the urgency of the issues. It is suggested that, in considering new developments, compromises and trade-offs will have to be made, depending on the circumstances. Economic benefits should not always take precedence, particularly where

such benefits are short-term and the damage to the environment will be great and long-lasting.

The key issues dealt with in the environment strategy are:

- Conflict between environmental control and development needs;
- Problems of water pollution, air quality, and noise in certain areas;
- Servicing problems in the north generally, but particularly in the smaller communities;
- The need to improve methods of solid-waste disposal; and
- The need for a coordinated process to deal with major resource development projects.

The objectives, policies, and programs of the ministry are not likely to change significantly in the foreseeable future, although adjustments will be made to reflect changes in sources, degree of pollution, and technology. The environmental process will also play a significant part in the development of the Northwest.

Housing

There are a number of important issues in Northwestern Ontario which are being addressed by the Ministry of Housing. These include:

- Housing costs;
- Shortages of rental housing, particularly in resource communities;
- Provision of housing in new or expanding resource communities;
- Capacity of small municipalities to implement housing programs; and
- Delays in the approval process.

Other issues are also discussed, including housing quality in remote areas and problems associated with declining communities.

With few exceptions, the initiation and delivery of housing programs is dependent on local government. There is a recognized need for administrative and other assist-

ance to communities under 5,000 so that they can participate more fully in available programs, and the ministry is improving its capability to provide such help.

The ministry is also working to achieve housing cost savings in the Northwest. It will be cooperating with the Ministry of the Environment in the formulation of an experimental program to advance the technology of servicing systems, test performance, and evaluate the impact on costs.

Industry and Tourism

The main objective of the Ministry of Industry and Tourism contributing to this strategy is to encourage further processing of natural resources in the region and to promote opportunities associated with supplying needs of the primary resource industries and consumer markets in the larger urban centres. The importance of local initiative in identifying and developing business opportunities is stressed.

The ministry operates an extensive range of programs in the Northwest, including assistance for small businesses and industrial parks. In addition, priority is now being placed on the preparation of a Tourism Development Plan focused on tourism throughout the north.

Labour

The ministry is undertaking a number of actions geared to key Northwestern priorities, including:

- Manpower;
- Employment of women;
- Human rights; and
- Occupational health and safety.

A major study of manpower issues in Northwestern Ontario will be completed shortly. This should lead to recommendations to improve manpower skills and availability in the region. In addition, the ministry is cooperating with the federal government to develop a Community Em-

ployment Strategy geared to help people, currently dependent on government support, to find gainful employment.

A number of initiatives are being undertaken to increase the participation of women in the northern labour force, such as an affirmative action program in conjunction with some northern employers. In the area of human rights, a proposed strategy for the future is outlined, including the opening of a storefront office in Kenora.

Following the recommendations of the Ham Commission, an integrated Occupational Health and Safety Division has been created within the Ministry of Labour. It will undertake a number of initiatives in the Northwest with respect to safe working conditions.

Natural Resources

The strategy of the Ministry of Natural Resources is centred on four main components:

- Forestry;
- Mining;
- Fish and wildlife harvesting; and
- Recreation.

The major forestry priority of the ministry is to develop a comprehensive regeneration plan for the area. Included in this plan will be the exploration of measures to improve the productivity of forest resources; development of modified harvesting techniques through the expansion of the forest-access-road construction program; and full assessment of the environmental implications of forestry operations.

The ministry is also seeking to upgrade the woods industry through measures such as further processing of kraft pulp products and birch and poplar. There may also be potential for a wood-based chemical industry in the Northwest, and commercial production of methanol fuel from wood could become commercially viable in future, depending on technology and energy prices.

In mining, the major concern is the reduced level of exploration and development in Ontario. Initiatives to correct this situation which are being considered include expanding the areas designated under the Mineral Exploration Assistance Program (MEAP) and more research by the ministry and Ontario universities. Fuller access to geological data would also contribute to more successful mining operations.

The government has recently set up a Cabinet Committee on the economic future of mining communities, chaired by the Minister of Natural Resources, to investigate and report on current problems related to both mining and mining communities.

To improve the potential for fish and wildlife harvesting, the ministry is examining ways to encourage increased production of commercial fish, fur, wild rice, and bait fish. In the area of recreation, the lake-planning program will produce some 400 cottage lots per year in the Northwest. The ministry has also initiated the Crown Land Recreation Study, which will produce recommendations for recreational land use in the Northwest.

The ministry will coordinate its land-use programs through the "Strategic Land Use Plan." The objectives and policies of this plan will reflect the government's strategic objectives for Northwestern Ontario.

Transportation and Communications

Over the past several years, the ministry has undertaken a number of initiatives to meet two major transportation issues in the Northwest—community isolation and freight rates. One example of the ministry's response to isolation is the extension of air links to smaller communities. Also, the ministry conducted an extensive investigation of freight rates in the north and has to date implemented nine of 20 recommenda-

tions of its report.⁵ One of the objectives of the government's review of the recommendations of the Select Committee on Highway Transportation will be to improve business opportunities and competitiveness in the north.

In the field of communications, many communities of the Thunder Bay area are poorly served by both radio and television. Where cable systems exist, their range may be low and technical quality poor. The current action plan to deal with this issue includes the development of the Pickle Lake Corridor, service to remote areas, and support for private sector proposals for low-power relay transmitter service in a number of Northwestern communities. A future communications strategy is also outlined, which centres on increasing provision of service to communities as funds become available.

Social Development

The policies and strategies of the five ministries in the Social Development Policy Field—Community and Social Services, Health, Education, Colleges and Universities, and Culture and Recreation — are outlined in the Strategy which reflect a number of common themes:

- Greater flexibility in programs to reflect unique regional characteristics, particularly for isolated communities;
- The need for more coordination of service delivery between ministries and the three levels of government;
- The need for dealing more effectively with rapidly declining or expanding resource communities; and,
- The need for innovative approaches in services for native people.

Social Services

The region is only slightly above average as a consumer of social services, but there are "pockets of poverty" in some declining and Indian communities. While there have been

⁵ *An Investigation of Freight Rates and Related Problems in Northern Ontario* (Toronto, 1976).

significant improvements in social services over the last five years, including three new homes for the aged and 18 new day-care nurseries, more needs to be done.

In particular, services should be more closely integrated with the programs of the Ministries of Health and Education. One way of doing this may be the creation of district social service boards which would be involved in the delivery of local services. Sharing of facilities and field staff with other ministries is proposed. Also, substituting home care for institutional care should be a priority in the Northwest.

Suggestions for social service improvements for the native population are also outlined. These include better financing of Indian Band social services, less federal administrative control, better relations between the Bands and Children's Aid Societies, and possible unification of social services administration between various Bands.

The Children's Services Division of the ministry, created in July 1977, is now preparing policy papers on legislation, local coordination, information systems, and standards. All of these activities will involve consideration of Northwest concerns, and all facets of the service-giving community will have an opportunity to react to these papers and make their views known. Also, one pilot project for the development of local children's services bodies will be in the north and should provide insight into better means of service delivery.

Health

The major health care issue in the Northwest is ensuring that adequate services are available at reasonable cost.

This presents a significant challenge, because of the distances and small populations involved. In part, the two District Health Councils (Thunder Bay and Kenora-Rainy River) are now responsible for advising the ministry on better ways to deliver and coordinate services.

As a result of the Underserved Areas Program, 43 family doctors are now practising in 21 communities that have been designated as underserved. In the case of dental care, 19 areas have been designated and, of these, 10 now have dentists in practise.

It is suggested that the future health strategy for the region, which will be developed in conjunction with the District Health Councils, should be based on the following:

- Strengthening public health services throughout the region;
- Additional focus on alcoholism-related problems;
- Strengthening primary-care services and encouraging professionals to work in groups to facilitate more flexible use of manpower;
- Closer coordination with social services programs;
- Better home-care programs as an alternative to institutional care;
- Continued efforts to get and hold professional manpower and to change and expand traditional roles of some professions, such as nursing; and
- Developing a long-range policy for health services for native people.

Primary Education

Since 1971 the Ministry of Education has taken a number of steps to deal with the problems of delivering education services by small and isolated boards and has dealt with some special issues related to the needs of native people. To build on this progress and meet the problems of the future effectively, a number of alternative policies are presented for discussion.

With respect to facilitating better education in the areas covered by the 19 smallest boards, three alternatives are suggested. These are: increasing the services provided by the regional office, pooling the resources of individual boards, or merging the boards into a single unit. Other existing and potential initiatives are also outlined, including appointment of more education

directors, pooling of information, adult education, development of standards related to busing students, and innovative approaches to curriculum development and staff utilization.

A possible strategy for native education is also outlined. It centres on counselling, curriculum planning, and dividing financial responsibility between the two senior levels of government.

Post-secondary Education and Manpower Training

This area is the responsibility of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. A large number of programs and facilities have been established to meet the needs of Northwestern Ontario. For example, Lakehead University offers some 50 courses out of Thunder Bay in 14 Northwestern communities. Also, the Faculty of Education introduced, in 1975, a teacher education program for native people. Confederation College now offers a complete range of programs on three campuses—Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Fort Frances. Mobile facilities have extended many of these programs to some 47 communities and 27 Reserves.

Four manpower training programs operate in the area—general adult training, apprenticeship training, training in business and industry (TIBI), and the Canada Manpower Industrial Training Program (CMITP). The latter three programs are available in small and remote communities and, where appropriate, programs are available on Reserves.

No specific new initiatives are proposed under this section. However, the programs and institutions can adapt to new priorities and needs as they are identified in future.

Culture and Recreation

Grants under the Wintario program and The Community Recreation Centres Act have recently had an important impact on

improving facilities in many northern communities and thus have generally contributed to the quality of northern life. Other programs of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation have also made a solid contribution to the Northwest:

- Ontario Educational Communications Authority (OECA) will soon be fully available in Thunder Bay, and portions of the service are available in other parts of the Northwest;
- The ministry has made a substantial investment in Old Fort William, and a number of local historical museums have also received support;
- Outreach Ontario and Festival Ontario provide support to cultural events in small communities;
- Additional funding is provided to northern communities for libraries and recreational programs.

The ministry will continue to develop these services in the Northwest, consistent with local priorities and financial constraints.

The ministry also includes the Indian Community Secretariat, which is responsible for the coordination of provincial policy development with respect to native people and coordination of communications between the government and native people. The secretariat will continue to encourage native groups to further develop their leadership potential and will contribute to the resolution of specific problems through the funding of special projects.

Justice

The Justice Policy Field includes four ministries—Attorney General, Consumer and Commercial Relations, Correctional Services, and Solicitor General. Over the past five years, these ministries have undertaken a number of initiatives designed to improve services and the administration of justice in the Northwest. Some highlights are:

- *The Courts:* Travelling courts have been expanded and, in native communities, the

Chief and members of the Band Council may be involved in sentencing decisions. There is also increasing involvement of natives in all aspects of the judicial process, and changes in legal aid have been adopted to meet problems of isolation.

- *Assistance to Consumers:* A consumer protection office has been opened in Thunder Bay, and a consumer education program, financed by the Regional Priority Budget, has also been undertaken.
- *Corrections:* Steps have been taken to provide more services in the region, including women's facilities in Kenora, a volunteer probation project in isolated communities and community residential centres, and mobile camps, staffed by native persons.
- *Policing:* Initiatives have been taken by the OPP to improve policing in isolated areas and also to develop a special Reserve Policing Project, with cost sharing from the federal government, resulting in Band Constables serving on Reserves.
- *Fire Protection:* The Office of the Fire Marshall has developed special projects for providing fire protection in some unorganized communities.

The momentum developed by these reforms should be maintained, as the administration of justice needs to be brought still closer to the local community. Future initiatives should be geared to crime prevention and rehabilitation and this, in turn, requires close integration with social services. In particular, emphasis will be placed on creating a justice system that responds to the needs of local communities and the native people. One important aspect of this is the integration and reorganization of children's services in the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

This section of the strategy also discusses further initiatives in the area of consumer protection and fire protection for the residents of Northwestern Ontario.

Community Settlement

Over the past five years, some important community settlement issues have been:

- Uncertainty with respect to the "growth centre" policy set out in the 1970 strategy for the Northwest;
- The adequacy of local government structure in developed areas and services for undeveloped areas;
- Levels of local taxation; and
- Financial problems faced by declining or rapidly expanding communities.

A re-evaluation of the growth-centre approach suggests that the concept should be dropped. (Note: This is an amendment to the original summary).

With respect to some communities, it is suggested that, for purposes of service delivery, a grouping or "clustering" concept may be appropriate. Three areas may have potential for the clustering of the provision of services:

- The north shore—Manitouowadge, Marathon, Terrace Bay and Schreiber;
- Nakina, Geraldton, and Longlac; and
- Red Lake, Balmertown, and Ear Falls.

It is proposed that the province, in conjunction with these communities, undertake a feasibility study to determine whether cooperative efforts to provide future services on a cluster basis are feasible.

It should be emphasized that the province will continue to respond positively to economic development throughout the region, and thus many other existing communities may benefit from provincial expenditures and investments.

Local government organizational problems were thoroughly explored in a background paper released by the province in 1976.⁶ It emphasized that the province will continue to assist northern municipalities that wish to examine their local government structure and consider appropriate changes. This particularly applies to areas where there are

several roughly equal-sized municipalities which are part of the same economic and physical area and may be experiencing duplication of services and lack of coordinated planning.

In the case of undeveloped areas, the province has implemented the Isolated Communities Assistance Fund to help sparsely settled areas meet some needs which are normally met by local government.

In the area of local government finance, the region has traditionally experienced a number of problems related to the lack of an adequate assessment base, the need for "up front" financing in high growth situations, and generally higher costs in providing municipal services. Over the past several years the province has responded to these problems with a wide range of reforms and initiatives in the provincial-municipal grants structure.

The combined effort of these measures has been to increase the total amount of transfers to local government by about 50 per cent over the provincial average on a per capita basis. This is in addition to significant spending under the Regional Priority Budget, where the bulk of spending has been concentrated in the Northwest. Accordingly, this strategy does not include proposals for further enrichments in financial transfers. However, it is suggested that further exploration of the cluster concept may uncover ways of reducing municipal expenditures.

The community settlement strategy also contains a discussion of problems associated with rapidly expanding, or declining, communities. In general it is suggested that there is no single, simple solution to the problems, but that clearer definition of the issues and assignment of responsibilities for dealing with them is needed in the future.

⁶The Hon. W. Darcy McKeough, *Proposals for Improving Opportunities for Local Government Services in Northern Ontario* (Toronto, 1976).

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